



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Quantity of Delivered Firewood
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Pests in Firewood
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Firewood Buyers Beware
Do Not Get Burned By Short Measure and Do Not Move Pests with Firewood

San Luis Obispo, CA, November 5, 2012--- As the winter season approaches, purchases of firewood for home heating purposes increases. “Buyers should be familiar with how much wood is in a cord to assure they are getting the amount for which they have paid. Also, residents are encouraged to purchase wood from local sources to lessen the chance of bringing harmful insects and plant diseases into the county,” stated Martin Settevendemie, San Luis Obispo County’s Agricultural Commissioner and Sealer of Weights and Measures.

Firewood must be sold on the basis of the “cord,” the official unit of measure defined as 128 cubic feet of neatly stowed and stacked wood. The volume of firewood in a delivery can be easily verified by carefully measuring in inches the average height, average length and the average depth of the stacked wood. These measurements are ideally taken while the wood is still stacked on the delivery truck prior to unloading. Using a calculator, multiply these three measurements and divide by 1728. The result of this calculation is the actual firewood volume in units of cubic feet, and must equal 128 for one cord.

Sellers of firewood are required to provide customers a receipt listing the name and address of the seller, the date delivered, the quantity delivered in units of the cord, and the price of the purchase.

The movement of firewood from locations outside the immediate area can inadvertently introduce harmful insect pests and plant diseases into the county. “Firewood can harbor pests that may have a devastating impact on our local trees,” according to Settevendemie. For example, the Goldspotted Oak Borer, an insect that has killed more than 80,000 oak trees in San Diego County during the last decade likely hitched a ride into California on firewood from Arizona. To date, this insect has not been found in San Luis Obispo County. “The best safeguard against unwanted pests and plant diseases associated with firewood is to buy your firewood from a source close to where you intend to burn it,” advised Settevendemie.

Contact the San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer’s staff at 805.781.5910 for more information.

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